

# QUOTING AND IN-TEXT CITATION USING MLA

This handout is designed to help you learn how to quote and cite information properly in your writing. Anytime you use information from an outside source – a book, an essay, an article, an online source, even a YouTube video – you **MUST** give credit to that source by documenting it in two ways: in an in-text citation and on your works cited page. Documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) are systems of giving credit to sources in an organized and specifically formatted way so that a reader can easily trace your steps all the way back to the specific sources you include in your paper. Documentation clearly indicates to your reader which information you borrowed from sources. Not documenting sources constitutes plagiarism (academic dishonesty), and offence that can result in a failing grade on an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. The basic rules for documenting sources are:

1. Direct quotes (exact language from a source) must be enclosed in quotation marks (“ ”) and followed by in-text citations
2. Paraphrases must be carefully constructed and also be documented by in-text citations
3. All quotes—direct or indirect—should be clearly indicated by signal phrases
4. Page, paragraph, or screen numbers should be included as often as possible in in-text citations
5. In-text citations should clearly match the full citations on your works cited page at the end of your document
6. Works cited entries should be complete and accurate

## BASIC RULES FOR IN-TEXT CITATION

- All in-text citations follow the same pattern:

↓ ↓

The writer says, “Outside Brown, quitters are no heroes” (Neusner 261).  
*quotation mark, text, quotation mark, space, parenthesis, author's last name, page number, parenthesis, period.*  
**THE PERIOD GOES OUTSIDE THE CLOSING PARENTHESES: Your sentence is not finished until you have provided a citation.**

- If the author’s name is contained in the sentence, however, it does not need to appear in the parentheses:

↓ ↓

Neusner says, “Outside Brown, quitters are no heroes” (261).

- There are two exceptions:
  - 1) Long Quote (see “Long Quotes” on this handout for details).
  - 2) Quote with Different End Punctuation (see “Quotes with Different End Punctuation” on this handout for details).
- Once you have quoted or paraphrased something and cited it, if you use any or all of the same words again, no citation is necessary—quotation marks, however, must still be used to indicate to your reader that you are presenting someone else’s words.

For example:	<i>First reference:</i>	The author says, “quitters are no heroes” (Neusner 261).
	<i>Subsequent reference:</i>	Therefore, students should realize that “quitters are no heroes.”
- One last thing to remember—When you quote an author in an essay or paper, the first time you mention that author, you must provide the full name. After that first time, use the last name only in all subsequent references to that author.

## THE DOCUMENTATION ROADMAP

It might be helpful to think about citing sources as a “roadmap” that leads readers all the way back to the sources you used.

The information in the

**IN-TEXT CITATION** leads to the



**WORKS CITED** list, where all of the information about the source is provided, so that the reader can then find the



**ACTUAL SOURCE** in a library, online, an article database, etc.

## PROPER PUNCTUATION AND FORMATTING FOR QUOTING AN AUTHOR

For the sake of consistency and simplicity, this entire handout uses quotes and paraphrases from one essay. The works cited entry for this essay is: **Neusner, Jacob. "The Speech the Graduates Didn't Hear." *The Structure of Argument*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2003. 261. Print.**

### • SIMPLE QUOTE

↓ ↓  
Neusner says, "When you did not keep appointments, we made new ones" (261).

*If the author is not indicated in the sentence, his/her name goes inside the parentheses:*

↓ ↓  
One professor says, "When you did not keep appointments, we made new ones" (Neusner 261).

### • QUOTE FROM SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE AUTHOR OF THE ORIGINAL

↓ ↓  
Professor Carter A. Daniel of Rutgers University says, "We had to do it, for the sake of education" (Neusner 261).

*This kind of quote follows the rules for a simple quote. Notice, however, that the author (Neusner) did not say these words: Professor Carter A. Daniel did. In this case, I introduce the quote using Daniel's name to indicate that someone other than the author of the text spoke/wrote the words.*

*If I do not name Daniel in the sentence before the quote, the quote would look like this instead:*

↓ ↓  
It has been said, "We had to do it, for the sake of education" (Daniel qtd. in Neusner 261).

*This way, the reader knows that the author (Neusner) did not actually say these words but was quoting someone else. ["qtd. in" stands for "quoted in"]*

### • QUOTE INTRODUCED WITH "THAT"

The author tells us that "We have prepared you for a world...that cannot exist" (Neusner 261).

*Notice this quote uses no comma and no colon. This is because I used the word "that" before the quote. When introducing a quote with "that" a comma or colon is never used.*

### • INTERRUPTED QUOTE

"Try not to act toward your coworkers and bosses," says Neusner, "as you have toward us" (261).

*This is called an interrupted quote. It is a variation of the simple quote. Try to vary the way you quote. It makes your paper more interesting to read and shows your strength as a writer.*

### • INCORPORATING A QUOTE

Obviously our professors think we are "peer-paralyzed adolescents" who focus on trivial things like popularity (Neusner 261).

*This quote has no comma or colon before it. That is because I am using the author's words to finish my sentence. This is called incorporating a quote. When you incorporate, no comma or colon is used.*

*The idea of using an incorporated quote is not to quote any more than you need to. Too many quotes distract the reader and weaken your ethos (credibility) as a writer.*

## • QUOTES USING AN ELLIPSE (...)

*The purpose of using ellipses when you quote a source is the same as incorporating a quote: it is a tool to allow you to use ONLY the part of the quote that is necessary to make your point.*

### IN THE MIDDLE OF THE QUOTE:

The author tells us that “We have prepared you for a world...that cannot exist” (Neusner 261).

*When placed in the middle of a quote, an ellipse indicates that you have left out part of the original passage/sentence. It is a way to bridge the gap of omitted words.*

### AT THE END OF A QUOTE:

Obviously our professors think we are “peer-paralyzed adolescents...” (Neusner 261).

*An ellipse at the end of this sentence indicates that there is more to Neusner’s sentence and I didn’t finish it.*

### AT THE BEGINNING OF A QUOTE:

You **NEVER use an ellipse at the beginning of a quote**. The use of a lowercase or uppercase letter indicates if you have begun the quote at the beginning of the original sentence or if you have begun the quote in the middle of the original sentence.

*A capital letter tells your reader that the quote begins at the start of the original sentence:*

Neusner says, “Outside Brown, quitters are no heroes” (261).

*A lowercase letter indicates that you have left out the beginning of the original sentence:*

Neusner says, “quitters are no heroes” (261).

## • INTRODUCING QUOTES WITH A COLON

Professors have been pretending to care for years: “when you were boring, we acted as if you were saying something important” (Neusner 261).

*This quote is introduced with a colon. A colon indicates that the quotation is an explanation of or example for the sentence I just wrote: “when you were boring (etc)” is an example of the pretending of professors I am talking about before the quote. The thing to remember about using a colon to introduce a quote is that you must provide a complete sentence of your own before the colon, and then a complete sentence of quote after the colon.*

## • LONG QUOTE

*A long quote is any quote that is more than four lines. Notice a few things: 1) The signal phrase is placed along the left margin; the quote itself is indented **TEN SPACES** (or two TABs; 2) All long quotes should be **introduced with a COLON**; 3) Long quotes are **NOT ENCLOSED BY QUOTATION MARKS**; 4) **The period goes BEFORE the parentheses** (citation); and 5) A long quote should **ALWAYS be followed by a sentence of your own**, which should begin back out at the left margin; don’t end a paragraph on a long quote.*

(blah blah blah—all paragraph text up to this point...) Neusner points out:

We the faculty take no pride in our educational achievements with you. We have prepared you for a world that ...cannot exist. You have spent four years supposing that failure leaves no record. You have learned...that when your work goes poorly, the painless solution is to drop out. But starting now, in the world to which you go, failure marks you. Confronting difficulty by quitting leaves you changed. Outside Brown, quitters are no heroes. (261)

I can’t help but believe that Neusner is at least partly right. Often, students will drop out of a class that isn’t going the way they want it to or if they are not getting the grade they want.

## • PARAPHRASING

One author thinks that college professors think of their students as a bother, as people to be gotten rid of, nuisances they pass merely to get them to go away (Neusner 261).

*Notice here that there are no quotation marks at all. This sentence is paraphrased. I borrowed the idea—none of the words, just the idea—from Neusner, so I gave him credit for the idea. Without this citation, I would be plagiarizing. If I used any of Neusner’s phrasing at all, I would have to put quotation marks around his words.*

## • QUOTES WITH DIFFERENT END PUNCTUATION (? AND !)

After ranting about how badly he has treated his students, Neusner asks, “And all this why?” (261).

↑  
The question mark is the original author’s—it appears in Neusner’s essay.

*This is an example of a quote that has different end punctuation—a question mark or an exclamation point. Here, the question mark is part of the quote from Neusner, so it remains inside the quotation marks and there is still a period after the citation.*

*However, if YOU ask the question or make the exclamation (the question mark or exclamation point is not in the original)—if the question is YOURS, not the original author’s—then you put the question mark or exclamation point after the citation. For example:*

Do you think students will “unlearn the lies” (Neusner 261)?

↑  
The question mark is MINE—it does NOT appear in Neusner’s essay.

## • QUOTES WITH ADDED WORDS AND/OR CORRECTIONS (USING SQUARE [ ] BRACKETS)

*Sometimes, you need to change a word, a verb tense, add a word, or otherwise adjust the grammar in a quote in order for it to make sense or “sound right” to your reader. Square brackets—[like these]—are used to indicate that you have added or changed something for clarity.*

Is it possible to “unlearn [professors] taught [students]” (Neusner 261)?

*Above, I have substituted the word [professors] for “we” and the word [students] for “you” to clarify who I the quote refers to.*

Neusner warns students to “Try not to act towards...coworkers and bosses as you have acted towards us [professors]” (261).  
*In this quote, I have added the word [professors] after “us” to clarify who the quote refers to.*

# AND ONE THING YOU MUST NEVER DO:

## • THE FLOATING (OR ORPHAN) QUOTE

I am so tired of teachers blaming their students for their incompetence. “When you were dull, we pretended you were smart” (Neusner 261). He even admits that he told us we were smart. What were we supposed to think?

*This is what I call a floating or orphan quote. Notice it stands all alone with no words of my own to introduce it, follow it, or make it flow well into my writing.*

The simplest way to fix this problem is with a colon: *The error most often happens when a colon would be appropriate anyway.*

I am so tired of teachers blaming their students for their incompetence: “When you were dull, we pretended you were smart” (Neusner 261). He even admits that he told us we were smart. What were we supposed to think?

But if a colon doesn’t really work, simply mentioning the author—turning it into a simple quote—is acceptable:

I am so tired of teachers blaming their students for their incompetence. As Neusner says, “When you were dull, we pretended you were smart” (261). He even admits that he told us we were smart. What were we supposed to think?

## The Speech the Graduates Didn't Hear

By Jacob Neusner

We the faculty take no pride in our educational achievements with you. We have prepared you for a world that does not exist, indeed, that cannot exist. You have spent four years supposing that failure leaves no record. You have learned at Brown that when your work goes poorly, the painless solution is to drop out. But starting now, in the world to which you go, failure marks you. Confronting difficulty by quitting leaves you changed. Outside Brown, quitters are no heroes.

With us you could argue about why your errors were not errors, why mediocre work really was excellent, why you could take pride in routine and slipshod presentations. Most of you, after all, can look back on honor grades for most of what you have done. So, here grades have meant little in distinguishing the excellent from the ordinary. But tomorrow, in the world to which you go, you had best not defend errors but learn from them. You will be ill-advised to demand praise for what does not deserve it, and abuse those who do not give it.

For four years we created an altogether forgiving world, in which whatever slight effort you gave was all that was demanded. When you did not keep appointments, we made new ones. When your work came in beyond the deadline, we pretended not to care.

Worse still, when you were boring, we acted as if you were saying something important. When you were garrulous and talked to hear yourself talk we listened as if it mattered. When you tossed on our desks writing upon which you had not labored, we read it and even responded, as though you earned a response. When you were dull, we pretended you were smart. When you were predictable, unimaginative, and routine, we listened as if to new and wonderful things. When you demanded free lunch, we served it. And all this why?

Despite your fantasies, it was not even that we wanted to be liked by you. It was that we did not want to be bothered, and the easy way out was pretense: smiles and easy Bs.

It is conventional to quote in addresses such as these. Let me quote someone you've never heard of: Professor Carter A. Daniel, Rutgers University (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 7, 1979):

College has spoiled you by reading papers that don't deserve to be read, listening to comments that don't deserve a hearing, paying attention to the lazy, ill-informed, and rude. We had to do it, for the sake of education. But nobody will ever do it again. College has deprived you of adequate preparation for the last fifty years. It has failed you by being easy, free, forgiving, attentive, comfortable, interesting, unchallenging fun. Good luck tomorrow.

That is why, on this commencement day, we have nothing in which to take much pride.

Oh, yes, there is one more thing. Try not to act toward your coworkers and bosses as you have acted toward us. I mean, when they give you what you want but have not earned, don't abuse them, insult them, act out with them your parlous relationships with your parents. This too we have tolerated. It was, as I said, not to be liked. Few professors actually care whether or not they are liked by peer-paralyzed adolescents, fools so shallow as to imagine professors care not about education but about popularity. It was, again, to be rid of you. So go, unlearn the lies we taught you. To Life!

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\*Jacob Neusner, formerly university professor at Brown University, is distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida in Tampa. His speech appeared in Brown's *Daily Herald* on June 12, 1983. It is reprinted in Rottenberg, Annette T. *The Structure of Argument*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003. 261-62.

### Works Cited

Neusner, Jacob. "The Speech the Graduates Didn't Hear." *The Structure of Argument* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Annette T. Rottenberg. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003. 261.

## QUOTING AND CITING PRACTICE

- INSTRUCTIONS:
- 1) Write out the original (the exact quote) from the paper I gave you about standardized testing
  - 2) Record the author and title of this paper (author is Emily Faust)
  - 3) Practice the different methods of quoting and citing, as indicated below (simple quote, etc.)  
using the entire original quote or a part or parts of the quote from Faust's essay.
  - 4) Clearly mark the boundaries of the quote by providing an introductory and signal phrase before the and a proper in-text citation after the cited material (quote).
- USE THE PREVIOUS HANDOUT ON QUOTING & CITING USING MLA TO HELP YOU.

ORIGINAL QUOTE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

a. Simple quote

b. Quote introduced with "that"

c. Quote with an ellipse in the middle of a sentence

d. Quote with an ellipse at the end

e. Incorporating a quote

f. Interrupted quote

g. Quote introduced with a colon

h. Paraphrase (use handout on paraphrasing correctly—on the wiki—to help you write a proper paraphrase)

h. Long quote (write on the back of this sheet; you may need to write out more of the quote than you wrote out above; write out the entire long quote—no abbreviating!)